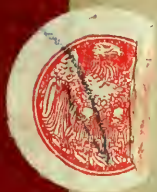


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Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary

OF THE

Planting of Providence.

AN ORATION

BY

THOMAS DURFEE.





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A
HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

DELIVERED ON THE

Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of
the Planting of Providence.

BY
THOMAS DUFFEE

PROVIDENCE
SIDNEY S. RIDER
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DISCOURSE.

THE traveller who, after a long day's journey, reaches the summit of some high hill which overlooks the way behind him, delights to pause with backward gaze and review the scenes through which he has passed. As he retraces his wavering course over hill and dale, by forest and river bank, or along the mountain's bulging breast, the great objects, the prominent features, stand out at once in luminous distinction ; then gradually the lesser points of interest, with hints and suggestions from which his memory fills out the picture ; until at last his whole journey, tedious some times in the making, lies before him, flooded with the golden evening light, a pure and perfect pleasure in the retrospect. To-day the city pauses on such a high specular summit, and, looking backward through the vista of two hundred and fifty years, sees the long series of her historic experiences rising in visionary pageant before her. She, too, makes out at once the great events, the magnificent passages, of her history ; then matters of lesser moment bringing in their train a crowd of recollections. She remembers, as she gazes, her thousand bitter toils and trials ; her thousand bitter dangers and disasters and troublous vicissitudes ; but with bitterness and trouble no longer ; for now she rejoices to remember how bravely she met them all and how heroically she endured or

overcame them. She remembers, too, her great industrial successes, her great military and naval exploits, and more than all, she remembers, with a memory cleaving to the innermost fibres of her being, her victorious sufferings in the sacred cause of spiritual freedom, and a divine joy, triumphant and tender as the roseate flushings of the dawn, over-spreads her majestic countenance. Superb and beautiful Mother! she beckons us, her children, to come up and share her grand delight. She charges me to speak for her, and interpret her birthday vision of her past, explaining, as best I can, the forces and the influences which have made her what she is, which have contributed to make us what we are.

FELLOW CITIZENS:—I am sensible how impossible it is for me to do justice to the occasion. The story of two hundred and fifty years cannot be told in an hour. Much must be designedly omitted. If I err by treating some points with too much, and some points with too little fullness of detail and reflection, I can only crave your indulgence, and ask you, each for himself, to supply my deficiencies.

Providence was planted by Roger Williams, together with his companions and followers, mostly from Massachusetts. The causes of the plantation were certain opinions which he held, and which, in accordance with his character, he proclaimed. Some controversy has existed from the first in regard to both the opinions and the character, and latterly it has been renewed in Massachusetts in an intensely partisan spirit. I deem it proper, therefore, to restate the opinions and to portray the character anew. For more than forty years the history of Rhode Island, and of Providence in par-

ticular, was largely shaped and influenced by Roger Williams, and I shall consider it a great gain if I can, by retelling a trite tale, succeed in imparting a fuller, truer and livelier conception of his character.

Born in Wales¹ and educated at Cambridge University, he became a clergyman of the Church of England, but soon revolting from it on account of what he considered its Romish perversions, he broke with it utterly, and fleeing before the persecution of Laud, crossed the ocean to begin a new life in the New World. His flight cost him bitter pangs,—“bitter as death to me,” he wrote twenty years later; but he was obliged either to fly or to dissemble his convictions; and for him, as for all noblest natures, a life of transparent truthfulness was alike an instinct and a necessity. This absolute sincerity is the key to his character, as it was always the mainspring of his conduct. It was this which led him to reject indignantly the compromises with his conscience which from time to time were proposed to him. It was this which impelled him when he discovered a truth to proclaim it, when he detected an error, to expose it, when he saw an evil, to try to remedy it, and when he could do a good, even to his enemies, to do it. He had the defect of his qualities;—an inordinate confidence in his own judgment. He had also the defects of his race;—the hot Welsh temper, passionate and resentful under provocation, and the moody Welsh fancy,—the wild and wistful melancholy of the Cymrian bards—too apt in his earlier years to disturb his mental balance with morbid scruples or desultory conceits, magnifying them into matters of lasting moment. Such a man would have been likely to provoke antagonism anywhere; in Massachusetts,

with her immitigable theocracy, he was sure to incur censure and final expulsion.

Roger Williams lived five years in Massachusetts before he was banished. He spent the first six weeks in Boston, the rest of the time in Plymouth and Salem, and yet Boston was the seat of hostile proceeding against him. How did it happen that he was most hated where he was least known? The explanation is simple. The new churches of the Bay were both bigoted and ambitious. They had established a sacerdotalism, more meddlesome and scarcely less despotic than the worst in Christendom. They wanted to consolidate and extend it. They had hitherto met no opposition; but in Williams they found an original and independent mind, intractable to their yoke. Soon after his arrival, being invited to become a teacher of the Boston church, he refused, because the church still held communion with the mother church, and he coupled his refusal with emphatic reproof. Will you say that his conduct was as uncharitable as imprudent? I make no apology for him further than to remark that the Anglican Church was then not only a retrogressive and a persecuting church, but also a main support of the autocratic pretensions of the Stuart kings. He had suffered from it in person, and he thought that to commune with it was to abet its tergiversation. The point, however, which I invite attention to is the utter frankness of his self-deliverance. The elders of the Bay, accustomed to a submissive deference from their juniors, were thunderstruck by it and never forgot or forgave it. They followed him to the senior church at Salem, to which he was soon called as teacher, with expostulation to the church for calling him, and so

weakened his hold there that he was glad, a few months later, to remove to the more liberal jurisdiction of Plymouth.

He remained at Plymouth, teaching in the church, but supporting himself by manual labor, nearly two years. His ministry was popular in the main and his person universally liked. Finally, however, he advanced some opinions which did not suit the steady-going Plymouth elders, and therefore, departing "something abruptly," he returned to Salem. There he acted as assistant to Mr. Skelton, the aged pastor of the church, and when Mr. Skelton died, less than a year later, became his successor. At Salem he was again under the surveillance of the rulers and elders of the Bay, and they were swift to make him sensible of it. He had written in Plymouth, for the Plymouth Governor and Council, a treatise on the Massachusetts Patent, in which he had maintained his doctrine that the King could not give the settlers a right to take away from the natives their land without paying them for it. He was not a lawyer but an ethical teacher, and it was doubtless as such that he maintained this opinion. In our day its ethical correctness is not disputed. It has always been good Rhode Island doctrine. He also criticised the patent because in it King James claimed to be the first Christian Prince who discovered New England, and because he called Europe Christendom or the Christian World. Williams did not scruple to denounce these formal fictions in downright Saxon as lies. He does not appear to have been, at any period of his life, a paragon of conventional propriety.

A rumor of the treatise got abroad, though it remained unpublished. The patent happened to be a sensitive point with the magistrates. It had been granted in England to an Eng-

lish trading company, and its transfer to Massachusetts was an act of questionable legality. Moreover it was exceedingly doubtful whether the rulers, in exercising the extensive civil jurisdiction which they claimed under it, did not exceed their authority. They were apprehensive of proceedings to forfeit it, and therefore were easily alarmed at any turning of attention to it. When they heard of the treatise they sent for it, and, having got it, summoned the author "to be censured." He appeared in an unexpectedly placable mood, and not only satisfied their minds in regard to some of its obscurer passages, but offered it, since it had served its purpose, to be burnt. The magistrates, propitiated by his complaisance, appear to have accepted the offer as equivalent to a promise of silence, though it is impossible that he, the uncompromising champion of aboriginal rights, can ever have meant to give, or even appear to give, such a promise. Accordingly when they heard soon afterwards that he was discussing the patent they were deeply incensed, though it was doubtless the popular curiosity excited by their own indiscreet action which elicited the discussion.

Their anger was aggravated by another doctrine then put forth by him, namely, that an oath ought not to be tendered to an unregenerate, or, as we should say, an unreligious man, because an oath is an act of worship, and cannot be taken by such a man without profanation. The sentiment resembles that which lately led the House of Commons to refuse the oath of office to a member-elect because he was a professed atheist. He also taught that an oath, being an act of worship, could not properly be exacted from any one against his will, and that even Christians ought not to desecrate it by

taking it for trivial causes. This latter view likewise finds its modern analogue in the growing feeling that oaths, too indiscriminately administered, lose their sanctity and come to be regarded as little more than idle forms. The doctrine was specially offensive at the time because the General Court, alarmed by a report of "episcopal and malignant practices against the country," had just then decided to test the fidelity of the people by tendering to them an oath which was virtually an oath of allegiance to the colony instead of the king. The measure was obnoxious to legal as well as religious objection. It was opposed by the people as well as by Williams, and for the time frustrated. It has been said that his opposition was a blow at the very foundations of civil society; but in Rhode Island a simple affirmation or subscription to an engagement, has been found as efficacious as an oath.

The magistrates again instituted proceedings against him, at first subjecting him to the ordeal of clerical visitation, then formally summoning him to answer for himself before the General Court. At the same time the Salem church was arraigned for contempt in choosing him as pastor while he was under question. The court, however, did not proceed to judgment, but allowed them both further time for repentance. It so happened that the inhabitants of Salem had a petition before the court for "some land at Marblehead Neck, which they did challenge as belonging to their town." The court, when the petition came up, refused to grant it until the Salem church should give satisfaction for its contempt, thus virtually affirming that the petitioners had no claim to justice even, so long as they adhered to their recusant pastor. Williams was naturally indignant. He induced

his church — "enchanted his church," says Cotton Mather — to send letters to the sister churches, appealing to them to admonish the magistrates and deputies of their "heinous sin." He wrote the letters himself. His Massachusetts contemporaries say he was "unlamblike." Undoubtedly they heard no gentle bleating in those letters, but rather the reverberating roar of the lion chafing in his rage. The churches repelled the appeal; and then turning to the Salem church, besieged it only the more assiduously, laboring with it, nine with one, to alienate it from its pastor. What could the one church do,—with the magistracy against it, the clergy against it, the churches and the people against it, muttering their vague anathemas, and Salem town suffering unjustly on its account,—what could it do but yield? It yielded virtually if not yet in form; and Williams stood forth alone in his opposition to the united power of Church and State. If, in the agony of his isolation, his heart distracted and his mind unstrung, "a power girt round with weakness," he uttered words better unuttered, we surely can afford to forget them and leave them for his traducers to gloat over if they will, while we remember only the grandeur of his solitary struggle.

The fateful court day came at last. The court assembles, magistrates and deputies, with the clergy to advise them. Williams appears, not to be tried, but to be sentenced unless he will retract. He reaffirms his opinions. Mr. Hooker, a famous clerical dialectician, is chosen to dispute with him, and the solemn mockery of confutation begins. The future of Rhode Island, to some extent the future of the world, hangs suspended on the issue. Will he, like his church, worn out and desperate, blenching before the unknown, lose heart

and yield? Never! He stands unshaken in the "rockie strength" of his convictions. He is ready "not only to be bound and banished, but to die for them." So, hour after hour, he argues unsubdued, till the sun sinks low and the weary court adjourns. On the morrow [Friday, October 9, 1635], still persisting in his glorious "contumacy," he is sentenced, the clergy all save one advising, to be banished, or, to adopt the apologetic but felicitous euphemism of his great adversary, John Cotton, "enlarged" out of Massachusetts. He was allowed at first six weeks, afterwards until spring, to depart. But in January the magistrates, having heard that he was drawing others to his opinion, and that his purpose was to erect a plantation about Narragansett Bay, "from whence the infection would easily spread," concluded to send him by ship, then ready, to England. The story is familiar how Williams, advised of their intent, baffled it by plunging into the wilderness, where, after being "sorely tost for one fourteen weeks, in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread or bed did mean," he settled, with the opening spring, on the east bank of the Seekonk, and there built and planted.

Thus far I have not mentioned his great doctrine of soul liberty. There are those who maintain that it had nothing to do with his banishment. Let us see. When, shortly after his arrival, the Massachusetts authorities rebuked the Salem church for choosing him as a teacher, they urged two objections to him, namely, his rigid separatism and reproof of the Boston church, and his opinion that "the magistrate ought not to punish for breaches of the first table unless thereby the civil peace be disturbed," this being the form in which

he then declared the right of the soul-liberty. This shows that Williams had, immediately upon his arrival, proclaimed the doctrine, and that the magistrates had immediately recognized its utter incompatibility with the cast-iron polity which they were endeavoring to establish. When he was arraigned, three months before the sentence, the doctrine was one of the "dangerous opinions" laid to his charge, and the clergy being consulted, declared that he who should obstinately maintain that the civil magistrate cannot intermeddle to stop a church from heresy or apostasy ought to be removed. The clergy were ready to banish him for that alone. Williams says his doctrine was one cause of his banishment. He also says that when the sentence was pronounced, Governor Haynes recapitulated the grounds of it, his maintenance of soul-liberty being one. We have seen that the magistrates wanted to prevent his plantation because they feared "infection" from it. What infection? Did they think, if he preached on Narragansett Bay the duty of a rigid separatism, the inadequacy of the Massachusetts patent, or his theory of oaths, that far-off Boston would hear among her triple hills the ringing echoes of his sermon? It is absurd to suppose it. No; what they feared was a contiguous plantation where faith would be free and persecuted consciences find a refuge. What they feared was soul-liberty put in practice; and if they feared it in practice on Narragansett Bay, would they tolerate the preaching of it in Massachusetts? The question answers itself. Other matters may have angered them more at the moment, but this was the animating principle, the great tap-root of all Williams's offenses, and it is incredible that they did not perceive it. It was, in fact, a virtual denial

of the very jurisdiction which they exercised when they banished him.²

Permit me to pause a moment longer at this point. The Massachusetts historians tell us that the treatment of Williams was exceptionally gentle and considerate. This is true. He was neither incarcerated, nor scourged, nor hanged, like some later victims of Puritan persecution. The treatment of him does not attract curiosity and rivet attention because it was unusually severe, but because it was a pivotal transaction in universal history. His trial involved not him alone, but also the grand idea which he represented, and it fascinates mankind because, while he was condemned, the idea triumphed through his fidelity, and because, though he may have been banished, it at least was "enlarged." The historians say, in excuse for Massachusetts, that she did but follow her instinct of self-preservation. In one sense this likewise is true. She was then simply an incorporation of Puritan Congregationalism clothed with civil powers. She could not accept the new idea without undergoing a transformation into a larger and freer form. She chose to preserve herself as she was. She who has reaped so many glories in her crowded career was not ripe for this, the most glorious of all, and so with mistaken scorn she passed it on to little Rhode Island. But this is not what her historians mean. They mean that she was in jeopardy from the opinions put forth by Williams in regard to oaths and the patent. This is a singular exaggeration. He was only a village pastor. He had little or no influence beyond his parish—for there were then no newspapers, and he had no vantage of political prestige or position. The only way in which his opinions were likely to

become generally known was by persecution. The historians urge further that he was eccentric, pugnacious, persistent, troublesome. Undoubtedly he was. When nature wants to preserve a precious seed, she encloses it in a bitter and prickly integument. So when the time comes, in the order of human improvement, for a new and progressive idea, we often find it lodged in a tough and thorny and, if you will, pugnacious personality, to fight for, protect and propagate it. Williams had his faults, but some of them, in the circumstances, did the work of virtues. A man who had to endure what he had to endure from Puritan clergymen and elders, laboring to "reduce him from his errors," was entitled to have some faults. The faults which he had have been grossly exaggerated. The apologists of Massachusetts, with zeal beyond knowledge, have raked the gutters of controversy and ransacked the rubbish-heaps of unaccredited rumor for testimony against him, forgetful that he was, with all his failings, the trusted and cherished friend of John Winthrop, the wisest and the best of the Puritans. Massachusetts can spare such apologists. She banished Roger Williams not for faults of behavior, but for errors of opinion. Her great desire was to found an orthodox State,—a State where the same theology should be preached in all the pulpits and believed at all the firesides, and where, generation after generation, her citizens could become religious and virtuous according to law. The individualism of Roger Williams antagonized her, and she expelled him because, thank Heaven, she could not assimilate him. She was, indeed, exacerbated by her personal and political antipathies and resentments, but her main motive was to be true to her darling orthodoxy. For long

years she was true to it, doing ugly and cruel things for the sake of it, stamping it broad and deep on her people, and only gradually learning, by bitter experience, that human nature is too vital and vast and various to take the mould of any compulsory creed without injury, but needs for its best development the elastic and congenial element of soul-liberty. She has nobly atoned for her narrowness by the universality of her later culture. We are all glad to learn of her now. Nevertheless she does not forget the iron discipline of her infancy, but still, through all the endless variety of her newer predilections, looks reverently back to it, and still points, with hereditary pride, to her permanent strain of Puritan orthodoxy as the very backbone of the Commonwealth. To this day the Massachusetts man, when he talks of orthodoxy, means the Calvinistic creed of the Puritans; whereas the Rhode Islander, when he talks of orthodoxy, which is seldom, means his own creed, if he professes any, though doubtless they both alike now know full well that absolute orthodoxy is only a delightful dream of the theologian or the philosopher—not the privilege of mankind.

We left Roger Williams in Seekonk. He had built there and planted. April came, and May, and his corn was springing to gladden him with hope of harvest. He expected to abide there; but now a message, sent by Governor Winslow, informs him that he is within the limits of Plymouth, and advises him to move across the river. He accepts the advice and, sometime in June, breaks up and departs. In fancy we can follow his little boat, laden with his household, as it emerges from its shady haven, and pushes out into the Seekonk. It turns southward with its silent passengers, and

slowly they make their way, in the unbroken solitude, betwixt high wooded banks, reduplicated in the pellucid river, luxuriant with verdure and glittering with the sunshine of June. But the sylvan landscape had no charm for them. They see their Seekonk home receding, and their hearts fill with an uncontrollable anguish. Thrice exiled — from England, from Salem, from Seekonk! Will an implacable persecution never cease to pursue them? They paddle on with mournful memories ominous of evil instead of hope. But hark! an animating salutation, *Whatcheer, Netop, Whatcheer*, rings from a neighboring rock, and the red men of the forest give them the welcome which their white brothers have refused. They halt and return the greeting. Again they proceed under happier auspices, and, with their sounding oars, startle the wild duck from the river's rushy marge and daze the antlered stag on the remoter hill. They round the precipitous cliffs of Tockwotton, and, gazing southward through the varied vista of the river, catch momentary glimpses of the bay beyond. The noble prospect does not detain them. They turn to the north and, hugging the eastern shore, ascend along the base of towering hills, clad with primeval oaks, and enter the cove, whose natural basin, receiving the unpolluted tides of the bay and the virgin waters of the Woonasquatucket and the Moshassuck, diffuses them widely into inlet and pool, across sandy bar and over sedgy flats, now traversed by busy thoroughfares, but then frequented only by flocks of feeding waterfowl or by the dusky fowler in his frail canoe. They continue their steady course until before them they behold a spring, which, gushing from the verdant turf and pouring its crystal tribute to the cove,

invites them to disembark. There, beaching their boat on the smooth white sand, they step ashore—Williams, his wife, his children and his five companions. They slake their thirst at the spring, they invoke the divine blessing, and Providence Plantations are begun.³

The story of the beginnings of a State or city, truly told in detail, is always interesting. The story of infant Providence cannot be so told. Unlike Boston, she had no diarist. Her public records are imperfect. We do not know how her settlers, without seed-time or harvest, subsisted the first year. The bay with its fish and fowl, the forest with its game and berries, must have been their constant resource. They probably procured some supplies from the natives. There is no tradition of desperate destitution such as more than once befell the Plymouth settlers. We may be sure, however, that their life was outwardly very poor and plain, full of hardship and privation, pinched at every point, however it may have been spiritually enriched by the freedom which they enjoyed. But if their story could be told, my time is much too short for me to tell it. I must be content to pass rapidly from point to point, briefly treating a few of the more characteristic topics.

Two topics of interest from their relation to the infant town and its founder meet us at the threshold. When Williams went from Plymouth to Salem he drew several persons after him. When he came to Providence, he had five companions and was soon joined by others. They seem to have been not fugitives, but followers. These facts show that, however contentious he was, he had along with his contentiousness, a singularly attractive nature. The ingenuous cleverness

which in his youth won the favor of the crabbed but intrepid old jurist, Sir. Edward Coke, still bore its natural fruit "The people," says Winthrop, "were taken by the apprehension of his godliness," which, translated into modern speech, means that he had, besides his more distinctively Christian graces, some of the magnetism of a popular leader. This, not less than the prospect of religious freedom, drew the earliest settlers. But they were the merest handful, and they would not have ventured, remote from succor, among a powerful tribe of savages without some assurance of safety. Williams could give it. He had, during his stay in Plymouth and Salem, zealously cultivated the good will of the natives, learning their language and studying their character, his "soul's desire" being to become a missionary among them. "God was pleased," he says, "to give me a painful, patient spirit to lodge with them in their filthy, smoky holes to gain their tongue." He was thus, as it were, providentially prepared for his work. He had the affable disposition, at once communicative and inquisitive, which easily captivated these simple children of the forest. They, too, were taken by the magnetism and mastery of his high moral qualities. They instinctively believed in him. The great Narragansett Sachems, Canonicus and Miantonomi, distrustful of the iron-visaged elders of the Bay, gave him their friendship without reserve. They deeded to him a territory like a principality, and he, with similar munificence, shared it equally with his fellow-settlers. Thus his influence over his countrymen drew around him the nucleus of the new State, and his influence over the Indians gained for it domain and security. For more than a generation the little plantation lay safely

nestled and fostered in the very lap of barbarism, through the unwavering regard entertained for him by these savage but magnanimous sachems. The city has testified its gratitude to him in imperishable bronze and granite; it ought to testify its gratitude to them in some equally appropriate form.

The settlers soon felt the need of a civil government, but they had no charter under which they could establish one. They therefore agreed to be governed by "the major assent" of the freemen of the town "only in civil things." At first the government was a pure democracy, all the powers being exercised by the freemen collectively in town meeting. It was too rudimentary to last. In 1640 a new system was agreed to, by which the powers were delegated to some extent and provision was made for compulsory arbitrations in judicial matters. This was a step forward, but only a short step tentatively taken. In 1647 the town united with the three other towns, Portsmouth, Newport, and Warwick, under the first charter. This charter was simply a grant of civil powers, not a constitution. It left the settlers to frame a government for themselves. The government formed by them was rather a confederation of the towns than a compact State. Under it no law could be enacted without the consent of the towns. It has been likened to the Federal Union; but the integration was far less organic and complete. It was not until later, under the second charter, that the towns were willing to part with their autonomy and become fully subject to a central authority. But, meanwhile, the first charter was a great boon to the settlers in their relations with the sister colonies, since it affiliated them to the mother country and legitimated their government.

It will be observed that soul-liberty was secured in the first compact, not by grant, but by limitation, the settlers agreeing to be governed "only in civil things." This was characteristic of Williams, who wrote the compact, though he did not sign it; for his doctrine was that every man has a natural right to follow the dictates of his conscience, so long as he keeps the civil peace; a right which the State can neither give, nor take away, nor control, even with the consent of the individual, since no man can absolve himself from fealty to his conscience. The limitation was tantamount to a constitutional declaration of the right in its widest meaning, covering not only freedom of faith and worship, but also freedom of thought and speech in every legitimate form. The right has never been expressed with more completeness. There are some who would have us think that the phrase "only in civil things," was simply a lucky hit, and that Williams, when he coined it, did not really comprehend its significance. My opinion is that both then and before then his doctrine was that the authority of government extends only to civil things, and that he had merely to exchange his pulpit phraseology for the plain vernacular of the people to make it manifest. The man who packs such a world of meaning into four little words does not do it by a slip of the pen. He clearly saw the principle and its universality; if he failed to foresee all the questions which might arise in applying it, and to solve them in advance, he simply failed to do then what no man since then has succeeded in doing. There is, between the undisputed provinces of civil law and spiritual freedom, a disputed frontier which never has been, and probably never can be, definitively apportioned.

We sometimes hear it said that the idea of soul-liberty was not original with Roger Williams. Grant it. He needs no doubtful blazon to enhance his glory. When the Great Master declared, "God is spirit, and they who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth," He lifted religion into a region far above all earthly rule, the region of soul-liberty. The church did not or would not so understand Him. It arrogated infallibility and spiritual domination, and persecution for heresy logically ensued. In the multitude of martyrs there were doubtless some who obscurely felt, and others who dimly discerned, the great truth. But did they utter it? If they did, their words passed like a broken echo in the confusion of the times. History has no record of them. The common cry was for toleration, for toleration as a policy, not as a right. But at last the church split into sects, and the Protestant sect again split, and splintered again, and the individual conscience, breaking from its pupilage, grew suddenly into a deeper and ever deeper sense of its own inner supremacy. Then it was that the master idea emerged, uttered feebly at first, not by powerful leaders in church and State, but by despised sectaries hunted by the law. Then it was that Williams received it. Perhaps he read it in some stray tract or pamphlet, such as then were scattered secretly in England, like seeds dropped by birds in their flight; perhaps he heard it in some nocturnal conventicle, from lips still livid with the pain of the pillory and the branding iron; or perhaps he listened to it, in some lonely lane or footway, from a fellow fugitive communicating it as they fled. Somehow it came to him, and he brought it, fermenting in his brain, to the New World. For five years he meditated and

matured it among the stubborn dogmatists of Plymouth and the Bay. He was an impulsive enthusiast, easily captivated by new ideas, but it was characteristic of him to examine them to the bottom and abandon them if he found them baseless or unsound. His contemporaries describe him as "precipitate and unsettled," having "a windmill in his head." They saw the superficialities of his character, not its deep foundation. His faith in soul-liberty never wavered. He came to Rhode Island to evangelize the natives; but when he saw the opportunity offered by the settlement growing around him, he recognized the providential work appointed for him, and set himself to perform it. He had not merely faith in his idea, but he had also such a mastery of it that he knew how to put it in practice. This is his glory, that he, first among men, made it a living element of the State, turning it from thought to fact, and giving it a corporate existence in which it could perpetuate and practically approve itself. There is no power like the power of a great idea when it once gets a firm foothold among men. The great idea, here first politically incorporated and shown forth in lively experiment, has made the circuit of the globe, driving bigotry like a mist, and superstition like a shadow before it, and sowing broadcast among men and nations the fruitful seeds of peace and progress, of freedom and fraternity. The little wisp of glimmering light which hung like a halo over the cradle of infant Providence, has brightened and expanded until it irradiates the world. This is and will be forever the unique glory of our beloved city.

The first settlers were exposed to a triple danger: From the Indians, from the neighboring colonies, from their own

dissensions. The Narragansetts, though friendly, were but one of several tribes. What if the tribes, alarmed by the rapid increase of the whites, were to unite for their destruction? Such a union was projected by the Pequots, a powerful Connecticut tribe, during the first year of the settlement. In the autumn of that year Pequot ambassadors were at the court of Canonicus to win over the Narragansetts. The Massachusetts rulers, informed of it, sent hastily to Williams, to avert the peril. Taking his life in his hand, he sped, in a poor canoe, through stormy winds and threatening seas, to the great sachem's wigwam. There for three days and three nights he was forced by his business to "lodge and mix with the Pequots, looking nightly for their bloody knives at his throat." He finally defeated their design and effected a league between the Narragansetts and the English which was quickly followed by the annihilation of the Pequot tribe. Subsequently he performed other similar services. Do you ask me if his persecutors relented? No! Winthrop proposed his recall, but they rejected the proposal. They pursued a Machiavelian policy with the Indians, fomenting their quarrels, reckless of the safety of Rhode Island. They harassed the Narragansetts, who were guilty of befriending the Rhode Island heretics, by harsh exactions, and maddened them by counselling the wicked murder of Miantonomi by Mohegan Uncas.¹ In 1643 the colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Haven formed a confederacy for mutual defense. The Rhode Island towns were not invited to join it. They asked to join it, but they were denied unless they would subject themselves to Plymouth or Massachusetts. The condition was refused. They preferred

the terrible hazard of Indian massacre to security on such terms. Fortunately the good will of the Narragansetts kept them unmolested until the storm of Philip's War broke over New England, and after carrying havoc to the outlying villages of Massachusetts, swept the mainland towns of Rhode Island like a hurricane. In that war the Narragansetts perished with the Wampanoags, and the dread of Indian hostilities ceased to trouble the colonies.

The danger from the neighboring colonies was more insidious and scarcely less formidable. They hated the heretical towns and pertinaciously sought to destroy them as independent bodies politic by extending their jurisdiction over them. Plymouth, already in undisputed possession of the eastern shore of Narragansett Bay, claimed the island of Rhode Island; Connecticut, the Narragansett country; and Massachusetts, parts of Providence and Warwick. It would be tedious to explain the grounds of these claims, or to describe the efforts which were put forth, both here and in England, on the one side and the other, to establish and defeat them. The contest was long and severe, but on the part of Massachusetts, the bitterest aggressor, grounded on the baldest usurpations. It involved not only the territorial integrity of the Rhode Island towns, but also that soul-liberty, so dear to them all, which was staked on their preservation. The contest was a blessing in disguise. It put the towns on their mettle, and it developed among the people, by giving them one great endangered interest to protect in common, that public spirit which is so necessary to organic civil life. They came out of the contest, triumphant at last, but when they came out of it, they came fused and welded

together, by the heat and pressure of their struggle, into a single commonwealth.

I mentioned a third danger, the dissensions of the settlers. The population of Rhode Island, of Providence especially, was singularly heterogeneous. She offered herself as an asylum for distressed consciences. The consequence was, professors of every form of dissent from the Puritan faith were represented here. There were men, too, who came, not so much because they were heretical as because they were peculiar, and in the promiscuous medley here, could comfortably enjoy themselves. Indeed, life in Providence, in those days, must have had a spicy zest and variety not to be found elsewhere in New England. But it had its dangers, too. Soul-liberty was supposed to give every one the right not only to entertain but also to utter his every opinion. When men claim and concede this right they have need not only to be considerate of others, when they speak for themselves, but also patient of others when they find themselves contradicted. This is a degree of self-control which is seldom acquired without discipline. The first settlers had had no discipline, and, yielding to their natural impulses, they gave their tongues too free a license. The result was a plentiful crop of feuds and controversies, some of them envenomed by vindictive passions. Politics caught the infection, and became virulent and factious. Roger Williams tried to play the part of peacemaker, but he was wiser in precept than in practice. His feud with William Harris was one of the most inveterate that afflicted the Plantation. Harris was a man of prodigious force of will and great natural ability, but aggressive and violent, ever ready to

embroil the community to carry his ends. The settlers called him the *Firebrand*. It was a feud of this kind which gave Massachusetts, by submission to her of some of the parties, a pretext for setting up her jurisdiction in Providence and Warwick. Apparently, therefore, the first effect of soul-liberty was an excessive individualism. For the purpose, however, of testing its practicability, nothing could have been better; for if soul-liberty was then practicable here, it was not impracticable anywhere. It successfully stood the test. Under the second charter the danger from internal discords and disorders diminished, and gradually, after Philip's War, the people settled to the hard and monotonous work of material and business development.

Shortly after Philip's War an event occurred which deserves mention, namely, the death of Roger Williams. His services to the colony had been varied and great. He had twice visited England for her; first to procure the first charter, and again to procure the revocation of Coddington's commission. He had often filled the highest civil offices at home. He had served as captain of militia in Philip's War when seventy-seven years old, so indomitable was his patriotism. I have largely depicted him already; I wish to add a few touches more. He has suffered in the popular conception from two causes. On the one hand, his fame as the Founder of the State has shed over his character a sort of mythical glamour, which has not so much idealized as unrealized it. Nothing could be falser. No more real piece of human flesh of toughest British fibre ever existed. On the other hand, the fame of his polemical writings has produced a different and wholly incongruous impression; namely, that he was simply a violent

and incorrigible disputant, who had the luck to maintain one new and good idea. This grossly falsifies by exaggeration. As a controversialist he had the vices of his temper and his times; but one might almost as well try to portray Milton from his pamphlets as Williams from his polemical writings. Let him who would learn what manner of man he was from his writings, read his letters, not one here and there, but the series consecutively, so as to realize their cumulative effect, and he will gradually become aware that he is making the acquaintance of a large and affectionate, philanthropical, public-spirited and many-sided nature. His versatility was extraordinary. He was, by turns, reporter, scholar, clergyman, trader, farmer, diplomatist, teacher, linguist, legislator, judge and man of letters. A man is denoted by his friendships. He numbered among his friends the Winthrops, Milton, Vane and Cromwell, the noblest of his contemporaries. He was, in his day, the most modern mind in America. He exhibited, two hundred and fifty years ago, the humanitarianism which is supposed to be peculiar to the present century. His magnanimity was inexhaustible. "Sir," Governor Winthrop wrote to him, "we have often tried your patience, but we could never conquer it." The vaporous theological fancies which sometimes unsettled him in Massachusetts, seem to have vanished utterly in Rhode Island in his preoccupation with practical affairs. Nevertheless, his censors object, he was headstrong and pugnacious to the end;—as witness his onslaught upon the Quakers. The objection must be allowed; but then he had the amplitude and the strength of the gnarled oak as well as its nodosity, and when he died, a

great figure passed away, and Rhode Island history became more commonplace and uninteresting.

From Philip's War to the Revolution was a century. The history of Providence during that century has no striking event until the last decade, precluding the Revolution. It is not, however, so much the striking events as the permanent results of an era that determine its importance. Eras which furnish the least for history have sometimes done the most for mankind. Sometimes, too, an era of dull monotony, showing on its surface little besides a steady material progress, has terminated in a great political change, which was all the while proceeding, by processes unrecognized, to its consummation. The century which ended in the Revolution was such an era. The material conditions then created and the material resources then accumulated were indispensable to the success of the Revolution. Nor could anything have been more favorable than just such a plodding period to the uninterrupted development of that spirit of independence which culminated in the Revolution. But this is a wider view than belongs to the occasion; though, considering the prominence of the city in the Revolutionary war, a suggestion of it is not impertinent.

The question for us now is, What were the builders and makers of the city doing during the century after Philip's War? They had first to repair the ravages of that war. When it began, the town contained from seventy to eighty houses. More than half of them were burnt. Before the attack upon the town, all but a very few of the inhabitants fled to the island of Rhode Island for security. Many of them never returned. We do not know the number of the

population remaining after the war, but it cannot have exceeded a thousand all told, though the town then embraced the entire county and a part of Kent. If we could see the site of the city as it then was after reparation, we should see simply a single row of houses, mostly rude cabins, strung along the eastern shore from Fox Point to the mouth of the Moshassuck, clustering a little at the northern end. To the east we should behold the hills still imperfectly reduced to tillage, and to the west a wild waste of water and wood, with some natural herbage for cattle and thatch for the cabins. If we were to enter the houses we should find the rudest furniture and utensils in scant supply, and the inmates clad in durable, but extremely homely and well-worn attire. The life they lived was unembellished, but racy and wholesome as wilding fruit. The great elementary sources of human happiness were theirs — home, family, friends, self-government, soul-liberty, and sound minds in sound bodies — and without stopping to ask whether life were worth living, they manfully set themselves to subduing the rough earth to their uses, which was then the great work to be done.

This first work was exceedingly laborious. Forests had to be felled, stumps eradicated, rocks and stones unearthed and removed, walls built, the soil reclaimed, wolves and foxes exterminated, roads laid out and made, and bridges constructed. All this had to be accomplished with the poorest implements. The patient drudgery — the tireless muscular and mental energy — of the first two or three generations of our fathers, beyond what was necessary for a meagre livelihood, was thus stored up and indestructibly capitalized in the very substance of the soil for the benefit of their posterity.

Land, say some of our modern theorists, is the free gift of nature, and it can no more be appropriated without injustice than the air or the ocean. What a silly fiction as applied to the farms of New England.

But what were the villagers on the river-bank here doing? They, too, were making the rough earth tillable and tilling it. Bucolic associations linger all about these hills. The houses had each their home lot, laid out to the eastward, with gardens, orchards, cornfields, and beyond them meadows or pastures with lowing kine. But the settlers also had the river and the bay before them inviting their enterprise. They were soon familiar with its treasure of fish and clams. Canoes and gradually boats were built. The growth was very tardy. Governor Hopkins counted the houses in 1732 and found only seventy-four on the east, and only twelve on the west side of the river.⁶ The settlers were without exception poor. The capital necessary to organize industry had to be accumulated by the slow savings of years. The first business organized for other than local purposes, was ship or vessel-building, quite extensively carried on at the mouth of the Moshassuck. This led naturally to an increase of commerce, at first with Newport and other American ports, and finally with the West Indies and the African coast. Commerce with the West Indies and Africa introduced the first considerable manufacture, which was—I would gladly soften the shock—the manufacture of New England rum. Foreign commerce, however, did not greatly flourish here before the Revolution. It was intercepted at Newport, which was more favorably situated for the reception of foreign imports and for their coast-

wise distribution, and which moreover, owing to its greater wealth, had got the earlier start.

It is not to be supposed that the commerce of Providence measures the extent to which the inhabitants of Providence were engaged in maritime pursuits. As her population increased, many of her boys and young men, inured to hardship but tired of farm life and thirsting for adventure, enlisted in Newport merchantmen and whaleships. During the French and Spanish wars a still more exciting service allured them. Numerous privateers were fitted out, many of which prosecuted their perilous work with brilliant success. Thus was bred up and disciplined that hardy race of skillful mariners, intrepid as enterprising, the very Vikings of the Revolution, who, during the war, made the privateers of Providence a terror to British commerce. Much of the shipping of Newport, during her occupation by the British, was transferred to Providence, and there used in commerce or privateering. At the close of the war the commerce of Newport was ruined, and Providence, having the ships and the sailors, took the lead. For more than forty years her commerce prospered and increased. Her merchantmen and whaleships ploughed every sea, and her harbor was spectacular with stately vessels, coming and going, or lading and unlading at her busy wharves. The prominent business men of that period — the Browns, the Iveses, the Arnolds, the Hoppins, Cyrus Butler, Richmond Bullock, Edward Carrington and others — were merchants engaged in commerce. All honor to them! For they not only built up the city while they built up their own fortunes, but they also introduced into the city, along with the commodities of many climes, the liberal

spirit and the larger ideas which are inspired by contact with many nations. At no time, if tradition may be trusted, has Providence society more happily combined simplicity with elegance and cordiality with intellectual charm. But the introduction of railroads changed the course of trade, and foreign commerce left the city for Boston and New York. Her deserted wharves now testify only of a glory which has passed.

I have passed beyond the Revolution, let me return to it. The Revolutionary record of the city, like the Revolutionary record of the State, is preëminently patriotic. The State had long suffered in her commerce from Parliamentary taxes and restraints, and was therefore the more sensitive to any new encroachment. For more than ten years before the war her attitude was increasingly belligerent. The Stamp Act was a dead letter here. No Governor would swear to support it; no officer dared administer it; and the General Assembly nullified it. In 1775 the State created a navy of her own, and gave the command of it to Abraham Whipple, of this city, who, obedient to his orders, forthwith captured the tender of the British frigate *Rose*, then off Newport, firing the first cannon fired at the Royal Navy in the war. The same year she recommended the creation of a Continental navy. Congress heeded the recommendation, and when the fleet was built, appointed Esek Hopkins, a North Providence man, to command it. It was comparatively a simple matter for a State so long habituated to the practice of self-government, to renounce her allegiance. She renounced it and declared her independence two months before the declaration by Con-

gress, and she is to-day the oldest sovereign State in the Union.

The city went heartily along with the State in all these movements, some of which she originated. She eagerly embraced every voluntary measure of non-importation and domestic manufacture by which the colonies manifested their independence. She first suggested, and by her decisive action in town meeting, led the way to the Continental Congress of the Revolution. The popular spirit here was signally shown as early as 1772 in the burning of His Majesty's armed revenue schooner the *Gaspee*, grounded on Namquit Point, while chasing a sloop belonging to John Brown, an eminent merchant of the city. At his call volunteers mustered by the score to burn the hated vessel, and, manning eight long boats under the command of Abraham Whipple, swooped down at night upon their quarry. After an exchange of shots, in which the first British blood in the Revolution was spilt, they captured the crew, put them ashore, then set the *Gaspee* on fire, and retiring saw it burst into flames and paint the midnight sky with a lurid portent of the approaching conflict. It was a patriotic and retaliatory but illegal act. Nevertheless, its perpetrators were safe, though large rewards were offered for their discovery, because the people who did not participate in it were of the same mind with those who did.

The city had the good fortune to number among her citizens a genuine statesman. Stephen Hopkins was a great man—great not only in capacity and force of mind, but also—what is much rarer—in originaive faculty. He early investigated the question between the mother country and

the colonies in its constitutional aspects, and marshalled the arguments on the side of the colonies with masterly ability. He found, moreover, an argument for independence, deeper than the logic of constitutional legitimacy, in the very nature of things, forbidding that this great country should remain merely a serviceable dependency of Great Britain. The value of his leadership cannot easily be overestimated; but nevertheless his prescient mind never went farther in thought than his fellow-citizens were ready to follow in action, so cognate to him was the community in which he lived. If ever the city sees fit to commemorate her Revolutionary services in bronze or marble, let her pass the military and naval hero by and erect a simple statue to her great civilian, for he certainly, in his time, was her most representative man.⁷

The Revolutionary history of the State is too familiar for rehearsal to-day. The population of the State at the commencement of the war was 55,000. For several years the island of Rhode Island was occupied by British troops, and the bay patrolled by British cruisers. The State was thus crippled in resources, and, owing to her extended water fronts, exposed to incessant depredations. She was obliged to incur heavy expenditures in men and means for her own protection. Nevertheless she nobly responded to the continental requisitions on both sea and land, and on the sea she far excelled, proportionately, any of her sisters. The city generously seconded the State. Her population was only 4,355; and her men capable of bearing arms 726. But if her men were few, her spirit was resolute; and forever, when the thrilling stories of Mifflin, and Trenton, and Princeton, and Yorktown are told, her prowess will be cele-

brated anew, and the martial glory of Hitchcock, and Thayer, and Talbot, and Olney will be freshly reflected upon her.

Rhode Island came out of the war decimated and impoverished. The State and people alike staggered under a load of debt. It has been said there was not property enough in the State to pay the debt. The crisis was desperate, and the General Assembly met it with a desperate remedy; namely, an emission of paper money to the amount of one hundred thousand pounds. The remedy operated in part as a bankrupt law and in part as a process of gradual liquidation. It alleviated distress by diffusing it. But the paper rapidly depreciated and, by unsettling values, caused paralysis in mercantile transactions. The General Assembly endeavored to arrest the depreciation by severe penal laws, but without success. Things follow their tendencies regardless of human legislation. Fiction can never be trusted to do the work of fact. The swift, sharp remedy by bankruptcy, pure and simple, would doubtless have turned out much better than a resort to paper money, if the people would have submitted to it. The business of the State, its commerce especially, was irreparably injured by such a resort. The city appreciated this from the first. She was always on the side of a sounder policy, and gradually caused it to prevail.

Rhode Island took no part in forming the Federal Constitution, and was the last State to adopt it. Her people had always freely governed themselves, and naturally hesitated to assume Federal duties and restraints. They could not know, what we know so well, how light the pressure is of those duties and restraints, how immeasurable the advantages which accrue. They could not then know what we now

know, that the Federal Union liberates far more than it restrains, in that while it is in one sense a limitation shutting down upon the States, it is in another and much truer sense a marvellous supplementary structure over-arching them, by which the people ascend to a participation in the larger influences, the ampler horizons, the grander and nobler life and destiny of the Nation. The opposition, however, was not so much opposition to the Federal principle as to the lack of constitutional safeguards, afterwards largely supplied by amendments. The seaport towns, Providence especially, always urged adoption, and finally secured it, though not until after too many exhibitions of factious and purely partisan resistance.

Contemporaneously with the adoption of the Federal Constitution, a young Englishman appeared here, bringing, pictured in his memory to the minutest detail, complete patterns of the Arkwright spinning machinery. A fortuitous conversation in New York with the captain of a Providence coasting sloop led to his coming; but it was no mere fortuity which determined him to remain. He remained, an inhabitant of the State, because he found in Moses Brown and William Almy open minds to entertain and espouse his projects, with wealth to execute them, a people capable and apt for his enterprises, and an abundance of water power. Nearly a century has gone by since Samuel Slater set his first seventy-two spindles into successful operation at Pawtucket, and, in the long retrospect, how magical his work appears, how marvellous and manifold the transformations which have resulted from it. The forces of nature became his apprentices. He touched, as it were, with his simple labor wand, the mighty

river giant, squandering his unused strength among our northern hills, and, subduing, bound him forever to the service of mankind. He mustered, as it were, from wood and waste, from valley and hillside, from rocky ridge and corrugated cliff, the idle genii of a thousand wandering streams and reduced them to like obedience. In consequence of the impulse communicated by him, villages and hamlets have sprung up along the banks of every water course which is capable of turning a mill-wheel. It is appalling to think how severely the State must have suffered, in the irreversible decay of her commerce, but for this new industry, which, gradually expanding, has continually opened new opportunities for labor and capital. The progress has not been an isolated progress. All the arts which minister to human happiness are more or less closely linked together—*habent quoddam commune vinculum*—and when one flourishes the others are improved. The new industry gave a new market to the farmer. Many a Rhode Island farm would have been deserted before now but for the manufacturing village built beside it. It furnished employment to the mason, the carpenter, the carrier, the laborer. It brought custom to the merchant and the trader. It laid out highways and built railroads. It has given impetus to other manufactures, and to the mechanic and decorative arts. No part of the State has profited so much by it as this city. No part is more dependent on it for its prosperity. It behooves her not to let it decay. The South can manufacture the coarser fabrics more cheaply, because her labor and raw material cost her less, and she will soon supply her own market for them. Rhode Island, therefore, to preserve her prestige, must aim

more and more at beauty and perfection of workmanship, and to that end must carefully cultivate every art and discipline which will promote, and carefully avoid every practice and policy which may defeat her aim.

My accomplished friend and former instructor, the President of the Rhode Island Historical Society, in a recent address to the society, has luminously shown how largely the State has been influenced and controlled in her material growth by her geographical features. 'The great feature of her geography is her magnificent bay, which, with its wealth of land-locked waters, its beautiful islands, its diversified shores and picturesque configuration of headland and haven and bay within bay, penetrates far inland, and which, safe of approach and easy of access, stands, as it were, with open arms and seaward look, inviting the commerce of the world. It indicates for the State, and especially for the city sitting regnant at its head, a commercial vocation. Another prominent feature is the numerous rivers and watercourses which, fed by tributary streams, descend with increasing volume to the bay. This feature makes the State, as if by the ordinance of nature, a manufacturing State. Commerce and manufactures — we have seen how both have flourished at different times ; commerce flourishes no longer ; but the great geographical peculiarity which formerly encouraged and prospered it still remains ; it remains for the people, therefore, without relaxing their hold upon manufactures, to revive it, and then, prosecuting both together, to fulfill the two-fold destiny prefigured for them in the primordial structure of the State. What is there to prevent this, whenever a general revival of American commerce occurs, if then the city, having com-

pleted her railway connections with the west and the north and established suitable terminal facilities, shall have among her wealthier citizens a few able men who are enterprising and sagacious enough to improve the opportunity?

Among the influences which have formed the city, the influence of popular education has been prominent. Rhode Island was backward in establishing any system of free schools. The distinction between secular and religious instruction was formerly less clearly understood than now; and it was therefore quite natural for the people of Rhode Island to question the right of the State to interfere in the matter of education. Other causes concurred. Many of the towns were poor and their population sparse. Men have to be educated to some extent in order to appreciate the value of education. It thus happens that the establishment of free schools is often the most bitterly opposed by those who need them most. It was so in Rhode Island. Our first provision for such schools was enacted in 1800, at the instance of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers. The act was unpopular, the people being unprepared for it, and, three years later, it was repealed. The city, however, having established her system, continued it notwithstanding the repeal. The system, greatly altered and improved, still exists. It needs no eulogy; it is the city's pride. Every year numerous pupils graduate with a useful English education, such as the colleges of fifty years ago were incompetent to impart. The effect has been to enlarge, elevate and diversify the industrial life of the city. It is the public schools of the city which have kept her in the front rank of business cities. They have refined and invigorated her

domestic, social and civic life. She owes a great debt of gratitude, which it well becomes her to acknowledge, to those public-spirited citizens who, nearly a century ago, perseveringly recommended the system to her people and finally secured its establishment, and, not less, to those other public-spirited citizens, who, in long succession, without recompense, have superintended its operations, and who, by their continued suggestions of change and improvement, have gradually carried it to its present high efficiency. Many public services have been more prominent; few more useful or meritorious.

The public schools do much, but still they only make a beginning. They do best when they not only instruct but also arouse their pupils and inbreed in them a noble ambition for improvement. Such pupils continue to learn while they continue to live. And the city does well to afford them educational aids, for it is among such that she must mainly look for her leaders in action and thought, and she will be fortunate if she never looks in vain. The citizens have not been unmindful of the value of such aids. Let me mention the Athenæum and the Public Library, the Mechanics Association, the Franklin Society, the Franklin Lyceum, the Historical Society, the Veteran Citizens' Association, the Soldiers and Sailors Historical Society, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Union for Christian Work, the Art Club, the Commercial Club, and the Board of Trade. Everybody appreciates the value of a good public library, especially when like ours it affords guidance as well as opportunity. The associations mentioned are less generally valued; but they are all useful when rightly used. A good cause, a great idea

or a good example is never safer than when it is in the keeping of a society organized to develop and disseminate its influences and to pass them on with accumulated power from generation to generation. Such societies lift their members out of themselves by giving them high social or public purposes to work for, which is a primary point of civil discipline. They furnish an arena where new projects and opinions can be winnowed and sifted in debate and their crudities corrected by the common criticism. They are organs through which the solitary student or thinker can readily reach the public ear. Some of them educate their members not only in the theory, but also in the practice of philanthropic and Christian virtues. They ought to be perpetually re-invigorated with new life and energy, for the city cannot afford to have them languish and decay.

Passing by the powerful influences of the churches and the press, I will mention one other educational agency, namely, Brown University. I am aware that many citizens listen with incredulity when the value of the University to the city is mentioned. It does not, like the public schools, come home to every family and fireside, associated with the irresistible charm of childhood, and so does not gain the popular heart. But consider how much the city would be impoverished by the loss of it. Consider the many eminent citizens of Providence who have graduated from it,—Eddy, Maxey, Burrill, Fenner, Russell, Pitman, Burges, Wheaton, Whipple, Staples, Ames, Anthony, Jenckes, Arnold, the Iveses, the Allens, and others, living and dead. What a cloud of witnesses for it, and witnesses, as the lawyers say, to be weighed, not counted. What a benefit to the city, to have had such

citizens. They gave her not their services only, but also their distinction. Imperfect as they were, they were continually doing something to keep fresh in the public mind those loftier ideals of manhood and citizenship which no people, however prosperous, can forget without degeneracy. Consider, also, the more direct influences exerted by the University. President Wayland lived among us nearly forty years—a mind of extraordinary calibre—foremost in every good cause, educational, industrial, philanthropical, or reformatory, and prompt to answer every call upon him for counsel or instruction in every crisis or exigency of the city, the State or the nation. Associated with him was Professor Goddard, an elegant but robust mind, singularly sensitive to the significance of passing events, and ready always to lavish his rich treasures of wisdom and rare graces of expression in the inculcation of correct opinions on the important political and social topics of the time. Need I remind you, also, of the lamented Diman, with his finished scholarship ever at your service; of Chace, with his acute intellect and large grasp of practical affairs, or of other college officers, living and dead, who have deserved well of the city! The danger to a city given over to business, immersed in gainful pursuits, is that it will come to consider money the supreme good. You all know what that means. It means moral and spiritual corruption and decay. Now, I maintain that the University has been, and, if sustained, will continue to be a powerful counter influence. It communicates a tone, a sentiment, an atmosphere—blowing freshly from the fields of literature and philosophy,—an addition of new men, with their faces set toward the sunrise, introducing new motives and new ideas. Now and again it has given us leadership.

I do not eulogize it; it has its deficiencies, it ought to be reinforced and improved. You appreciate its deficiencies, which is well; I want you also to appreciate its value, which would be better; and then, best of all, to labor heartily for its improvement; making it what it should be, the educational crown and brightest ornament of the city.

It was not until 1832 that Providence became a city, with a City Government, by Mayor, Aldermen and Council. The first Mayor was Samuel W. Bridgham, a gentleman and lawyer of high repute. His successors, Thomas M. Burgess, Amos C. Barstow, Walter R. Danforth, Edward P. Knowles, James Y. Smith, William M. Rodman, Jabez C. Knight, George L. Clarke, William S. Hayward and Thomas A. Doyle have all been able and energetic, some of them eminent men. Their names speak for them. Alas! that the office is vacant to-day, and that he, the latest of them, who would most have rejoiced in this high festival, lies cold and dumb in his recent grave, taken away by a mysterious Providence when we most confidently counted on his presence. For years he has been so completely identified with the city that it seems almost like a violation of natural law for the celebration to proceed without him. Our eyes still look for his familiar figure, our ears still listen for his clarion voice, and, though baffled and disappointed, still refuse to be convinced that they will see and hear him no more forever.

The city has been fortunate, also, in her Aldermen and Common Councilmen. The list includes numerous excellent and able, and many distinguished men. They served at first gratuitously, more recently for a small compensation. Manifestly, however, their services have been rendered, not for

the pay, but to satisfy that sentiment of public duty which is the soul of good citizenship. For years now the service has been very onerous, requiring great prudence and sagacity. In the last quarter of a century the population of the city has more than doubled, and her costliest public works have been constructed. During that period water has been introduced, the City Hall and many other public buildings have been erected, numerous new streets have been laid out, and numerous old ones altered and improved, bridges have been built and sewers constructed, and the police increased and reorganized. Doubtless the city owes much to the indefatigable energy of Thomas A. Doyle, very much to his exhaustless enthusiasm of civic service, but he could not have pressed these great works to completion without the coöperation of the Aldermen and Councilmen. Their accomplishment has involved an immense outlay of money. It would be folly to say that there has been no waste or extravagance ; but it is safe to say that there has been no wanton waste, and that many things censured as extravagant at first, have won approval in the end. Generally, without doubt, our municipal affairs have been wisely and economically administered. Thank Heaven ! there is no scandalous smirch of jobbery or peculation upon them. The future—nay, the present—still presents difficult problems to be solved, vast works to be performed. May the future never disgrace the past. It is the city's good fortune that the officers who expend her taxes are elected by the citizens who pay them, and are, therefore, under no temptation to bid for popularity by prodigal expenditures. I venture to advise her never to let either demagogue or doctrinaire delude her into relinquishing this great advantage so long as she can retain it.

FELLOW CITIZENS :—I must conclude my address, leaving many topics untouched. Fifty years ago the city celebrated her two hundredth anniversary. She was then in outward appearance but little more than a village of less than twenty thousand inhabitants. She had no worthy public buildings ; her streets were ill-wrought or poorly paved ; her commerce had begun to decline, and her manufactures were still an experiment. The late Judge Pitman delivered the bi-centenary discourse. If at its conclusion, when for a moment he turned with anxious hope to the future, the angel of prophecy had graciously unsealed his vision and shown him the city as she is to-day, with her borders enlarged, her population sextupled, her streets improved, with her massive City Hall, her commodious school-houses, her splendid churches, her charities, her comfortable houses and palatial mansions, her stately business structures, her numerous manufactories, her street railways, her central thoroughfares teeming with traffic and humming with industry, and her general aspect of metropolitan magnificence, the spectacle would have filled him with wonder and admiration. We are on the threshold of a new half-century. Its fifty years, marching in single file, advance invisibly through the mysterious region of the future, bringing with them the fortunes of the city. Would we, if we could, lift the veil which conceals them? Would we not rather recoil with fear, lest, instead of seeing the city progressive and prosperous, her population sextupled again, we should see her lethargic, stationary or decaying? Such mutations have befallen other cities. I do not anticipate such for ours. She may not grow in the next half century so rapidly as in the last ; but with her great natural advantages, her

disciplined business faculty and manifold experience, her prestige of past success, and still unfaltering confidence, she has only to maintain her breed of noble men, her supply of intelligent, virtuous and enterprising citizens, to make her continuous progress assured. Let us then have faith in her destiny. Let us be true to her and labor for her improvement, not materially alone, but in all wise and excellent ways and things. Let us labor also for a truer realization of her great doctrine of soul-liberty, disdaining any longer to be satisfied with the degenerate form of it which is but little better than a selfish and palsyng individualism, and endeavoring after that grander form, exemplified by Roger Williams himself, which enlarges while it liberates, and which, instead of isolating men, draws them together in free and friendly union for the promotion of every worthy public or philanthropic end. Thus let us labor, my fellow citizens, and the city will surely grow and prosper, not only in wealth and population, but also, what is infinitely better, in mental, moral and spiritual life and power.

NOTES.

[NOTE I.]

ACCORDING to tradition, Roger Williams was born somewhere in Wales, the exact place being undetermined. Dr. Reuben A. Guild, however, produces a record which he thinks shows that the tradition is at fault. The record consists of certain entries of baptism in the register of the parish church in Gwinear, a small town in Cornwall, England. The record is as follows, to wit:

"Willyam Williams, son of Mr. William Williams, bap. 27 Nov. 1598. Roger, 2d son of William Williams, Gent., bap. 24 July 1600. Humphrey, son of William Williams, bap. 24 April 1625. John, son of Humphrey Williams, Gent. bap. at High Bickington, Devon, 1660."

The inference is that the Roger Williams named in the record was born in Gwinear early in the year 1600. The question is whether he was the founder of Rhode Island. The date of birth, inferred from the baptism, corresponds perfectly with the allusions to his age which are to be found in the writings of Roger Williams. But Roger had two brothers, viz.: Robert, who for a time resided in Providence, and afterwards in Newport, and a brother alluded to as a "Turkish merchant." Why, if the Gwinear Roger was the founder of Rhode Island, do not the names of these two brothers appear, since Roger is not the last name of the family in the register? Dr. Guild suggests two conjectural reasons. One is that the elder William Williams may have removed from Gwinear soon after the birth of Roger. This does not seem to be probable, because it is inferable from the record that Gwinear continued to be the residence of the family until 1625, when Humphrey was baptized. The second reason is that "as a rule only the baptisms of the eldest sons are entered of record, 'they being in the direct line of succession,'" and that the baptism of Roger was entered because he was named for Sir Roger Williams, a famous soldier of the age

of Elizabeth. Dr. Guild adduces no evidence to show that it was the rule or custom of the church to register only the baptisms of the eldest sons, and it does not seem probable that any such rule or custom existed. The fact that the eldest sons are "in the direct line of succession," does not afford a very satisfactory inference, for they may die childless, in which event the second sons succeed, and so on. The conjecture that an exception was made in favor of Roger because he was named for Sir Roger, is too fanciful to build upon. I have no wish to depreciate the Gwinear record. The Roger Williams named in it may be our Roger. My point is simply that the proof as yet is not plenary; though further investigation, which I trust Dr. Guild will diligently prosecute, may make it so. I take pleasure in referring the curious reader to Dr. Guild's Monograph, entitled "Footprints of Roger Williams," recently published by Tibbitts & Preston, Providence, R. I., where the subject is discussed.

[NOTE 2.]

Governor Winthrop's Diary is much the most trustworthy authority in regard to the proceedings which ended in the banishment of Roger Williams. Under date of January 5, 1630 [O. S.], Winthrop notes the arrival of Roger Williams in the ship *Lyon*, under date of April 12. The same year we find the following, to wit: "At a court holden at Boston [upon information to the Governor, that they of Salem had called Mr. Williams to the office of teacher], a letter was written from the court to Mr. Endicott to this effect: That whereas Mr. Williams had refused to join with the congregation at Boston, because they would not make a public declaration of their repentance for having communion with the churches of England, while they lived there; and besides had declared his opinion, *that the magistrate might not punish the breach of the Sabbath, nor any other offence, as it was a breach of the first table*: therefore they marvelled they would choose him without advising with the council; and withal desiring him, that they would forbear to proceed till they had conferred about it." Under date of October 11, 1633, Winthrop writes: "The ministers of the Bay and Sagus did meet once a fortnight, at one of their houses by course, where some question of moment was debated. Mr. Skellon, the pastor of Salem, and Mr. Williams, who was removed from Plymouth

thither [but not in any office, though he exercised by way of prophesy], took some exception against it, as fearing it might grow in time to a presbytery or superintendency, to the prejudice of the churches' liberties." Doubtless Williams by this "exception," which subsequent events show was not groundless, made himself still further offensive to the churches of the Bay. Under dates of December 27, 1633, January 24, 1633, O. S., and November 27, 1634, Winthrop gives an account of the proceedings of the Governor and Council relative to Williams's treatise on the Massachusetts Charter. Under date of February 30, 1635, Winthrop writes: "The Governor and assistants sent for Mr. Williams. The occasion was, for that he had taught publicly, that a magistrate ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man, for that we thereby have communion with a wicked man in the worship of God and cause him to take the name of God in vain. He was heard before all the ministers and very clearly confuted." The following appears under date of July 8, 1635: "At the general court, Mr. Williams, of Salem, was summoned and did appear. It was laid to his charge, that, being under question before the magistracy and churches for divers dangerous opinions, viz: 1, that the magistrate ought not to punish the breach of the first table, otherwise than in such cases as did disturb the civil peace; 2, that he ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man; 3, that a man ought not to pray with such, though wife, child, etc.; 4, that a man ought not to give thanks after the sacrament nor after meat, etc.; and that the other churches were about to write to the church of Salem to admonish of these errors; notwithstanding the church had since called him to the office of teacher. Much debate was about these things. The said opinions were adjudged by all, magistrates and ministers [who were desired to be present], to be erroneous, and very dangerous, and the calling of him to office, at that time, was judged a great contempt of authority. So, in fine, time was given to him and the church of Salem to consider of these things till the next General Court, and then either to give satisfaction to the court, or else to expect the sentence: it being professedly declared by the ministers [at the request of the court to give their advice], that he who should obstinately maintain such opinions [whereby a church might run into heresy, apostasy or tyranny, and yet *the civil magistrate could not intermeddle*], were to be *removed*, and that the other churches ought to request the magistrates so to do." This pas-

sage very clearly shows several things, to wit: 1, that at the meeting of the General Court, July 8, 1635, Williams and the church were both found guilty, the one of holding the "dangerous opinions" alleged, and the other of contempt in calling him to office while he was under question for them: 2, that their cases were postponed, not for trial, but for sentence, unless Williams would retract and the church purge itself by submission: 3, that foremost among the "dangerous opinions" laid to the charge of Williams was his doctrine of soul-liberty; and 4, that this doctrine was selected by the clergy for special reprobation, and the maintenance of it declared by them to be a good ground for banishment. It is evident that the other matters charged were regarded by the clergy at least, if not by the magistrates, as matters of minor moment. When Williams again appeared before the General Court he had written the letters sent by the Salem church to the other churches requesting them to admonish the magistrates and deputies. These letters and a letter written by him to his own church to persuade it to renounce communion with all the churches of the Bay, were now further set up against him, and doubtless at the time greatly increased the animosity of the court. Winthrop tells us that Williams justified the letters and maintained all his opinions, and that, Hooker being unable to reduce him from any of his errors, he was sentenced. The sentence was as follows, to wit:

"WHEREAS, Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the church of Salem, hath broached and divulged divers new and dangerous opinions against the authority of magistrates: as also writ letters of defamation, both of the magistrates and churches here, and that before any conviction, and yet maintaineth the same without any retraction: it is therefore ordered that the said Williams shall depart out of this jurisdiction within six weeks now next ensuing; which if he neglect to perform, it shall be lawful for the governor and two of the magistrates to send him to some place out of this jurisdiction, not to return any more without license from the court."

It will be observed that the grounds of sentence are here summed up under two heads, to wit: "opinions against the authority of magistrates," and the "letters," the letters being treated rather as matter of aggravation than as an independent offence. It will also be observed that the language is "divers opinions against the authority of magistrates," which, of course, means more than one opinion. But Winthrop mentions only two opin-

ions which can be characterized as "opinions against the authority of magistrates," namely, the opinion in regard to breaches of the first table, and the opinion in regard to oaths. Which of these opinions had the greater influence in determining the sentence? The answer may not be absolutely certain, but, if we look only to Winthrop, I do not think there can be any reasonable doubt. There is nothing in Winthrop to show that the contemporaries of Williams were ever seriously alarmed by his teaching in regard to oaths; whereas we have only to note the opinion of the clergy in regard to the doctrine of soul-liberty, as stated by him, to see how rooted was their aversion to it, and how relentlessly they were bent upon its extirpation. Winthrop, under date of January 11, 1639, after relating the decision to send Williams to England, uses the following language, to wit: "The reason was, because he had drawn above twenty persons to his opinion, and they were intending to erect a plantation about the Narragansett Bay, from whence the infection would easily spread into these churches [the people being, many of them, much taken with the apprehension of his godliness]." The reader will observe that the word here is "opinion," not opinions, thus clearly denoting that there was one opinion with which Williams was so identified, that Winthrop could naturally speak of it without further designation as "*his* opinion." Of course, the opinion meant must have been his famous doctrine, for he held no other opinion which was likely to disseminate itself by "infection," or by reason of the enthusiasm of his followers, in the event of his removal to Narragansett Bay. Certainly, therefore, if Winthrop were our only authority, the conclusion would be irresistible that the doctrine of soul-liberty was not only among the causes, but the principal cause, of the banishment.

Williams, in "Mr. Cotton's Letter Examined and Answered," says: "After my public trial and answers at the General Court, one of the most eminent magistrates, whose name and speech may by others be remembered, stood up and spoke: 'Mr. Williams,' said he, 'holds forth these four particulars: first, that we have not our land by patent from the king, but that the natives are the true owners of it, and that we ought to repent of such a receiving it by patent: secondly, that it is not lawful to call a wicked person to swear, to pray, as being actions of God's worship: thirdly, that it is not lawful to hear any of the ministers of the Parish

Assemblies in England; fourthly, that the civil magistrates' power extends only to the bodies and goods, and outward state of men. I acknowledge the particulars were rightly summed up." (Publications of the Narragansett Club, Vol. I, pp. 40, 41.) In his letter to Endicott he again enumerates the causes, making them the same. (Pub. Nar. Club, Vol. VI, p. 217.) In his letter to Major Mason, he says that Governor Haynes pronounced the sentence of banishment. It may therefore be presumed that it was he who recapitulated the four particulars. He tells us that Haynes, afterwards, being in some difference with the Bay, made the following memorable confession to him, to wit: "I think, Mr. Williams, I must now confess to you, that the most wise God hath provided and cut out this part of his world for a refuge and receptacle for all sorts of consciences." (Pub. Nar. Club, Vol. VI, pp. 344, 345.) He means, of course, that Haynes thereby virtually confessed that he erred when he took part in banishing him for his doctrine of soul-liberty. It has been urged that Williams's statement does not show that he considered that this doctrine was specially influential in causing his banishment, but rather the contrary, since he mentions it last. But he professes to state the causes as recapitulated by the magistrate. A complainant preferring charges might naturally prefer the graver first; but a magistrate passing sentence, if he recapitulates the grounds of it, and wishes to be impressive, is likely to reverse the order, using the rhetorical figure of the climax rather than the anti-climax.

It will be remarked that Williams mentions two causes of banishment which are not included in Winthrop's specification, to wit: his separatism and his attack on the patent. In explanation of this, it has been suggested that perhaps Williams may have been tried on all the charges ever lodged against him, whether new or old, and that Winthrop only specifies such as were new. The trouble with this explanation is, that the charge in regard to oaths was not new, and that Williams had never before been summoned to answer to any complaint of his separatism. There is an explanation which seems to me more probable. Winthrop probably states the charges on which Williams was arraigned, being the charges formally preferred. If the trial had taken place before a tribunal accustomed to technical methods, it would have been confined to these formal charges. The trial took place before the General Court, which was a rep-

representative assembly rather than a judicial tribunal. It is difficult for a court composed of expert lawyers to confine the trial of an exciting case to the record; for a popular assembly to do so would be little short of a miracle. The trial of Williams before such an assembly would naturally travel out of the record and involve his character generally. So far on the supposition that the trial itself actually extended to the "four particulars." But, let it be remembered, that, according to Winthrop the trial on the charges stated by him was concluded in July, and the case stood continued for sentence simply, unless before sentence Williams should "give satisfaction to the court." Now it is not uncommon for even the strictest tribunals to allow themselves, after the accused has been convicted, a considerable latitude of inquiry into his antecedents for the purpose of determining the kind of sentence which shall be imposed upon him. It may be that the four particulars were mentioned with that view. Or it may be that the discussion between Hooker and Williams took a range wider than the record, and that Haynes referred to the discussion instead of the trial when he said "Mr. Williams *holds forth* these four particulars." Williams's statement that the four particulars were mentioned "after my trial *and answers*," well accords with this supposition. That Winthrop correctly reports the formal charges is further confirmed as follows: It was not Williams alone who was put on trial, but Williams jointly with the Salem church, which persisted in retaining him as pastor. The Boston church undertook to labor with the Salem church for this. Nathaniel Morton, in "The New England Memorial," says "there was a public admonition sent in writing from the church of Boston to the church of Salem for the reducing of Mr. Williams and the erring part of the church." This writing contained a statement of "errors in doctrine maintained by some of the brethren of the church of Salem, tending to the disturbance of religion and peace in family, church and commonwealth." The statement recited by Morton, is practically the same as Winthrop's, except that it omits Winthrop's fourth charge, which is a small matter, concerning decorum rather than doctrine, and adds one further allegation of error, to wit: that magistrates ought not to take an oath of fidelity from "the body of their subjects though regenerate." It mentions neither separatism nor the patent.

John Cotton is the principal authority for the view that the doctrine of

soul-liberty had nothing to do with the banishment. Cotton, answering Williams, imputes fraud and falsehood to his statement of "particulars," and declares that Williams wisely conceals the name of the "eminent magistrate" who summed up the grounds of his banishment, lest, if named, "he should be occasioned to bear witness against such fraudulent expression of the particulars." Of course the imputation recoils upon its author. Williams, with his ardent temperament, may have sometimes fallen into exaggerations, but he was incapable of lying. The imputation betrays a hostile and calumnious temper which should be allowed for in considering Cotton's letter as authority. It should also be borne in mind that the letter was written ten years after the event by a man who meanwhile had had his own perplexities, familistical and other, to occupy him, and who, moreover, reproaches Williams for bringing the matter up for discussion with him, because he so seldom attends civil courts, having a distaste for them. Yet he readily engages in the discussion, contradicting Williams and giving his own differing account. It is only too natural for men in such circumstances to persuade themselves that they actually remember that things were as, looking back from their later point of view, they think they must have been. I do not think Cotton was above making this mistake. He says, "The two latter causes which he [Williams] giveth of his banishment were no causes at all, as he expresseth them;" or in other words, that his teaching in regard to separatism and soul-liberty were not among the causes of his banishment. In saying that the doctrine of soul-liberty was not among the causes, Cotton not only differs from Winthrop, but contradicts himself, for it was one of the errors noted in the admonition to the Salem church, and according to Morton, the admonition was signed by Cotton. Morton, moreover, a contemporary of Williams, imbued with the contemporaneous feeling, makes this doctrine, and this only, the subject of special comment and condemnation. Cotton says that the doctrine could not have been among the causes, because other men, known to hold it, were tolerated in both church and State. Evidently he either forgets or ignores the law enacted in Massachusetts in 1644. This law was as follows, to wit: "If any person or persons in the jurisdiction . . . shall deny the ordinance of magistracy or their lawful right or authority . . . to punish the outward breaches of the first table and shall appear to the court willfully and

obstinately to continue therein after due time and means of conviction, every such person or persons shall be sentenced to banishment." (Records of Massachusetts, Vol. II, p. 85.) The fact that this enactment was in force when Cotton wrote his letter throws a flood of light on his candor. It is true the enactment is aimed not against the mere holding of the obnoxious opinion, but against the maintenance of it. Possibly Cotton may have intended to reserve to himself the benefit of this distinction, but if so, his inexplicitness is exceedingly disingenuous. Manifestly what Williams means was that he was banished for promulgating or maintaining the opinions enumerated. For him, a knowledge of the truth imposed the duty of teaching it. He knew that the smothered fire goes out, that the belief unuttered perishes in the breast of the believer. His feeling in this respect strikingly appears in his letter to John Endicott. Endicott had been a member of his church at Salem. He had adopted and publicly professed the doctrine of soul-liberty. He subsequently retrograded and was concerned as governor in the shocking prosecution of Clarke, Holmes and Crandall. Williams addressed a letter to him on occasion of it, reproaching him with apostolic plainness and power for his tergiversation. "I fear," he wrote, "your underprizing of Holy Light hath put out the candle and the eye of conscience in these particulars." He was very careful himself not to put out "the candle and the eye of conscience" by refusing to bear witness to the Holy Light which visited him.

The matter would be of little moment to the fame of Williams, if those who maintain that the doctrine of soul-liberty was not one of the causes of his banishment, did not find it necessary to make compensation by exaggerating the other causes. Cotton says that to the best of his observation and remembrance there were only two causes: namely, "his Williams's] violent and tumultuous carriage against the patent," and his opposing the oath of fidelity. Now, when or where was he guilty of such "violent and tumultuous carriage"? Was it among his little flock of faithful parishoners? The language is strong enough to import that he had raised a riot and mobbed the police. Probably if there was any justification for such language, it was simply this, that, being tormented by clergymen and elders "laboring to reduce him," he lost patience and expressed himself with an emphasis that startled them. Winthrop gives

no intimation of any violence or tumult. Williams tell us that his contention was that the Massachusetts settlers ought to "repent receiving the land" of the natives by patent; Cotton represents that his contention was that they ought to repent receiving the patent itself and return it. The statements differ materially; which is the more likely to be correct? The former is easily perverted into the latter, or even misunderstood for it. Everybody knows how frequently such permutations occur in oral discussion. Everybody knows how often in such discussions men put their own words into mouths of their opponents, and then condemn their opponents for them. It was also more common two hundred and fifty years ago even than it is now for controversialists to draw their own inferences from the doctrines of their opponents, and then impute them to their opponents as the doctrines held by them. We cannot positively assert that Cotton did this. But we can positively assert that the doctrine which Cotton attributes to Williams was not contained in the latter's treatise on the patent, because Winthrop states the matters in that treatise which gave offense and does not mention it. Will it be said that Williams developed the doctrine subsequently? Winthrop gives some account of his subsequent teaching. Under date of November 27, 1634, he writes: "It was informed us that Mr. Williams had broken his promise to us in teaching publicly against the King's patent, *and our great sin in claiming right thereby to this country.*" He nowhere says that Williams taught that the settlers ought to repent receiving the patent and return it. If this was his teaching, why does it not appear in the specification of "dangerous opinions" given by Winthrop? And why was it not included by Cotton himself in his admonition to the church at Salem among the "errors tending to disturbance of peace in the commonwealth"? If the doctrine was taught by Williams as Cotton says it was taught, and created the sensation which he says it created, the omission is inexplicable. Until these difficulties are removed it is safest to assume that Williams, instead of Cotton, has stated his own doctrine correctly. Evidently the proper method of making amends to the natives for land taken without payment under the patent was not to surrender the patent, but to pay for the land. Williams perceived this; for Winthrop, stating the purport of his treatise, tells us that he "concluded that, claiming by the King's grant, they could have no title *except they compounded with*

the natives." A surrender of the Massachusetts patent was precisely what the King of England and the persecuting prelates of the Church of England wanted, and Williams was no fond lover of either King or prelate that he should wish to play into either's hands. There are some who press Cotton's statement to a still further conclusion; namely, that Williams maintained that both the patent and the government under it were alike void. No conclusion could be more erroneous. His whole course of conduct, both while he lived in Massachusetts and afterwards, shows that he recognized without question the jurisdiction and legitimacy of the Massachusetts government "in civil things." And so likewise the consequences of his opposing the oath of fidelity have been magnified or misremembered. The German poet Goethe, when he went to work in his old age to write his autobiography, significantly entitled it "Truth and Fiction from my Life," because he realized how impossible it was for him to recollect the incidents of his life correctly, or to represent them as they happened without coloring or modification, since he could not become his earlier self again. It would have been well for John Cotton if, when, under a strong bias of polemical prejudice, he undertook, ten years after the event, to give from memory the reasons why Williams was banished, he could have anticipated the great German in this thought and governed himself accordingly.

[NOTE 3.]

Giving my fancy rein, I have ventured to suppose that Williams was joined by his wife and children in Seekonk; and, if the removal did not take place until June, the supposition is not improbable. The common account founded on tradition is that he removed with five other men, namely, William Harris, John Smith, miller, Joshua Verin, Thomas Angell and Francis Wickes. (Staples's Annals of Providence, p. 20. Arnold's History of Rhode Island, p. 40.) Another account is that he was accompanied by Thomas Angell. (Materials for a history of Rhode Island collected by Theodore Foster. Col. of R. I. Hist. Soc., Vol. VII, p. 83. Stone's Life of Howland; note, p. 344.) Still another account is that the salutation, "What Cheer," was given to Williams and Angell when they were on an exploring expedition before Williams came to the Moshassuck "to settle with his family there." (Col. of R. I. Hist. Soc., Vol. VII, p. 83, note S.)

[NOTE. 4.]

I have been asked to reconsider my characterization of the killing of Miantinomi as a "wicked murder." I am aware that different men have come to different conclusions on this subject, according to their prepossessions and to the authorities which they accept. Any thorough treatment of the question would necessitate an exploration, collation and weighing of original testimonies, such as cannot be undertaken here. I have adopted the prevalent Rhode Island view, which is also the view of the learned editor of Winthrop's diary, Mr. James Savage. The reader who is curious about the opposite view, can find it ably stated by the late William L. Stone, author of the "Life of Brandt," in a little book published under the title of "Uncas and Miantinomoh." Mr. Stone, in my opinion, gives too much credence to uncritical authors like Cotton Mather, and too little to Rhode Island writers.

[NOTE 5.]

Roger Williams sailed for England to procure the revocation of Codrington's commission in November, 1651. He returned early in the summer of 1654. In a letter to John Winthrop, Jr., under date of July 12, 1654, he writes: "It pleased the Lord to call me for some time, and with some persons, to practice the Hebrew, the Greek, Latin, French and Dutch. The Secretary of the Council [Mr. Milton], for my Dutch I read him, read me many more languages." This statement is particularly interesting, from the fact that Milton, in composing his "Paradise Lost," borrowed largely from the "Lucifer," a drama by the Dutch poet, Joost van den Vondel. The "Lucifer" was published in January, 1654. A recent English book on the subject, entitled "Milton and Vondel: A Curiosity of Literature. By George Edmundson, M. A.," says: "It is at least possible that it was from the lips of Williams himself that Milton first heard the rhythmic lines and learnt to appreciate the poetical power and fine imagery of Vondel's masterpiece."

NOTE 6.

My authority for this statement is that marvellous piece of minute antiquarian research, "The Planting and Growth of Providence, by Henry C. Dorr," (Rider's Historical Tracts, No. 15, p. 158.) In 1870, Mr. Rider printed in pamphlet a manuscript purporting to give the names of the owners or occupants of buildings in the town of Providence, from 1748 to 1771. The manuscript was found among the papers of Kinsley Carpenter, who died in 1859, at the age of 98 years. The author notes on the manuscript that it was penned from memory without patrolling the streets to count the buildings, and may contain some errors. It shows that the number of dwelling houses in 1749 was 143, and in 1771, 309, an increase of 166 in 22 years. It shows that in 1771, there were 88 barns and 189 storehouses and shops, including four cooper shops, six distilleries, two blacksmith shops, two grist mills, two candle works, a tan house, a rope walk, a paper mill, a clothier's shop, a chocolate house, a slaughter house and a potash works. Besides these there were 15 so-called public buildings, viz.: A college, President's house, court house, jail, work house, four school houses, Baptist meeting house, church, Presbyterian meeting house, New Light meeting house, Powder house and Friends meeting house.

The reader will get some idea of the growth of the city in more recent times from the two following tables:

POPULATION

OF THE TOWN AND CITY OF PROVIDENCE FROM 1708 TO 1885.

1708.... .1,140	1800.... .7,614	1870.... .68,904
17303,916	1810.....10,071	1875100,675
17483,452	1820.... .11,767	1878.....99,682
17553,159	183016,836	1880104,852
17744,321	184023,172	1883116,755
17764,355	185041,513	1884.....120,000
17824,310	186050,666	1885.....121,000
17906,380	186554,595	

VALUATION
OF THE CITY FOR TAXATION FROM 1832 TO 1885.

1832... .. 13, 121, 200	1860.....58, 131, 800
1837.....14, 516, 150	1865.....80, 564, 300
1840.....17, 195, 700	1870.....95, 076, 900
1845.....23, 729, 100	1875121, 954, 700
1850.....31, 959, 600	1880.....115, 921, 000
1855.....56, 296, 297	

The city was enlarged in 1868 by the annexation of the ninth ward, and in 1874 by the annexation of the tenth ward.

[NOTE 7.]

A good biography of Stephen Hopkins was until recently a desideratum. The want has now been supplied, so far as it can be with the materials extant, by Mr. William E. Foster, the accomplished librarian of the Providence Public Library, in his excellent work entitled "Stephen Hopkins: A Rhode Island Statesman. A Study in the Political History of the Eighteenth Century," published as Nos. 18 and 19 of Rider's Historical Tracts.

[NOTE 8.]

Mayor Doyle died after a short illness, June 9, 1886.

LITERARY AND HISTORICAL EXERCISES
AT THE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23, 1850.

1. MEMORIAL MARCH.

D. W. REEVES,

Conductor.

2. VOLUNTARY OF PSALM 100.

MUSIC BY J. O. STARKWEATHER,

Sung by the Arion Club.

JULES JORDAN,

Director.

3. ADDRESS BY HIS HONOR ACTING MAYOR ROBBINS.

Ladies and Gentlemen :

We have assembled to-day to begin with appropriate ceremonies the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the settlement of Providence. That the opening exercises should be held within the walls of this venerable edifice, from which the principles formulated by the founder of these plantations have gone forth with world-wide application, is a tribute to him who defied the persecutions of his associates and braved the dangers which surrounded him in the effort to provide a haven of rest for those who suffered for conscience' sake.

The city has chosen well in its selection of the place within which is to be delivered the historical discourse commemorative of the event it is to celebrate.

To portray in fitting language the sufferings, the trials and the persecutions of the first settlers of the Providence Plantations, who builded better than they knew, to follow and recount the many vicissitudes of our ancestors, and to describe the changes from the town to the city government is the province of the historian.

Neither is it for me to attempt to place before you ever so briefly the record of the growth and prosperity of this municipality from the date of its incorporation as a city.

The duty which has been assigned to me is that which was intended for another, and which it was confidently hoped would be performed by one whose life has been identified with the greatest growth of the city, and whose position for eighteen years as Chief Magistrate qualified him more than any one else to present to those who are here assembled the progress and development of all the varied interests which have made this the second city in New England.

His broad and comprehensive views of what was most needed, both for the good government of the community and the advancement of its welfare, which have received the endorsement of the citizens whose interests he endeavored to serve, has been a potent factor in placing this city in the advanced position which it occupies.

No one can regret more than I that it was not permitted the late Thomas A. Doyle to participate in the exercises which to-day inaugurate an epoch in the history of this city from which in time to come other celebrations will date, and which would have afforded to him as well as his hearers so much gratification.

To those who are now assembled in this grand old church, and who have watched with pride the great advancement of the municipality, the day, though fraught with a memory tinged with sadness, is nevertheless bright with the hopes of a success far beyond that which has already been attained, and which will be unequalled by the future history of other cities.

The capabilities of its citizens; their regard for good government and willing obedience to wholesome laws; the patronage and fostering care for its institutions of learning; its natural resources with their possibilities for greater developments, all combine to guarantee a prominence beyond the highest anticipation of those who now participate in doing honor to the event which the occasion commemorates.

These principles of good government having then inception in the minds of those who framed the first laws of our ancient town, are an heirloom of which the citizens may justly be proud; not alone that they have been to them a safeguard in protection of the public polity, but they have been disseminated wherever, throughout this broad country, the sons and daughters of Providence have fixed their homes. So, too, has been the influence of its institutions of learning, outstretching beyond measurement and molding the opinion of men and framing them for positions in life which have reflected the highest honor upon their native city. Again, from within its borders have been sent forth those products of skilled labor which have reached to every clime, and have borne witness to the industry, thrift, ability and energy of its people.

All these and more have contributed to make the city of Providence renowned, and in pausing a moment to review the past and measure the advance which Time in its slow but sure march has meted out, every true citizen must rejoice that he is one of a community of whose record he has no reason to be ashamed, and that he has lived by the principles which the founders of his city enunciated and which were fostered and cherished by succeeding generations.

To those of our citizens who have assembled to honor by their presence the anniversary of the settlement of the Providence Plantations, in the name of the city I extend to you a cordial welcome, and to those who have returned to their native city to join in its festivities and celebrate its natal day, as well as to those who come as strangers within its gates, I give the hearty greeting which first saluted our founder—"What Cheer."

4. SALUTATORY ODE.

WORDS BY REV. F. DENISON, *Music by Prof. A. A. Stanley.*

SUNG BY THE ARION CLUB.

1.

CITY OF FREEDOM: Break forth into singing;
 Praise ye glad people the Father Divine;
 Out of great treasures, with gratitude bringing,
 Lay your new offering on liberty's shrine.

Ancestors' memories sacredly keeping,
 Hallow in song their illustrious deeds;
 Millions, the fields from their sowing, are reaping,
 Chanting thanksgivings in concord of creeds.

II.

Soul-freeing truth is the trumpet-tongued angel
 Waking the world with her voice from above;
 Here in the wild was proclaimed that evangel,
 Here rose a temple to brotherly love,
 Guarding from peril fraternity's altar,
 Consecrate refuge for spirits oppressed,
 Owning the ancient and catholic psalter,
 Anthem of Bethlehem heard in the West.

III.

Jubilant sing we our city of beauty,
 Favored of God and exalted in name,
 Foremost and fearless in patriot duty.
 Wearing her scars and escutcheons of fame;
 Splendid at birth, as the star of the morning,
 Struggling alone with the tempest and gloom,
 Now with a host our republic adorning,
 Joying in liberty's far-spreading home.

IV.

Free to our portals we welcome as ever
 Exiles for conscience akin to our sires,
 Bound in a fellowship naught may dis sever,
 Keeping aglow the original fires.
 Freedom! Soul-Freedom! Thou kindest devotion,
 Herald of mercy; Great Breaker of chains;
 Breathe o'er the earth, like the wind o'er the ocean;
 Nations upraised shall re-echo thy strains.

5. PRAYER.

BY REV. EZEKIEL G. ROBINSON, *President Brown University.*

Almighty God, King of all the earth, who reignest over all nations, who sittest on the throne of Thy holiness, before Thee would we bow in humble reverence and true worship. Unto Thee would we bring our offering of thanksgiving and praise. With gladness would we utter the memory of Thy great goodness to the sons of men. Thou wast the God of our fathers, leading them up out of the Egypt of spiritual and political bondage, and through them laying the foundations of a great nation. Thanks be unto Thy holy name for the precious heritage of just ideas, of true principles and of free government which we have received from them. When clouds and darkness were round about them and perils were before them, Thou wast light within them; a pillar of fire in their gloom. Thou didst guide them in paths of righteousness and truth. Blessed be the name of the Lord, our God, for all that He has wrought through them for the nations of the earth and for the generations that are yet to come.

We give Thee most hearty thanks, our Father and our God, that in Thine infinite wisdom Thou didst raise up and bring to these shores Thy servant, the founder of this city; that Thou didst enable him to discern so clearly between what is due to the authority of the civil power and what to the sacred rights of conscience; that Thou didst plant within him an undying love for truth, a persistent purpose to search for it and to shrink from no sacrifice that he might possess and defend it; that Thou didst nerve him to bear with fortitude and patience his adversities, to render good for evil to his persecutors; that Thou didst inspire him with sentiments of justice and of mercy and of Christian charity in all his dealings with the heathen into whose territory Thy good providence had brought him, and with a spirit of uprightness in all his intercourse with his fellow citizens. Unto Thee, O God, do we give thanks that he was always and everywhere, according to the light vouchsafed him, Thy humble servant, a conscientious and persistent disciple of Jesus Christ, our Lord; and that Thou madest him the teacher of principles that have emancipated nations. Unto Thee, Thou whose faithfulness is throughout all generations, do we give thanks for the goodly city that has arisen around the resting place of Thy faithful servant. Thou hast shielded it from the

sword without and the noisome pestilence within. Thou hast prospered its citizens; Thou hast increased their wealth and hast given them knowledge; we pray that they may never be left to forget the Author of their mercies, and of their manifold and ever-multiplying blessings.

Preserve Thou to us in their integrity our free institutions. Dwell Thou in the hearts of the people, filling them with a just and holy indignation against all who would debase or corrupt them. Save Thou us from the domination of the impure. Grant unto us, legislators and magistrates, who shall be just and upright; who shall speak always the truth; who shall despise the gains of oppression, and who shall shake their hands from holding of bribes; who shall not be greedy of gain or of human applause; who shall hate evil and love righteousness; who shall be free from the fear of man and shall always revere Thy holy name.

Hear Thou, we beseech Thee, our prayer for Thy blessing on the Chief Magistrate of the nation; on all officers of our State and city; on all the people of our common country.

Accept now, O Thou Judge of all the earth, our thanksgiving and our petition. Help us to lay to heart the lessons so recently read to us from the biers of the dead; forgive Thou our transgressions; guide Thou each of us in the path Thou hast marked out for us; and in Thine own way and time bring us into the eternal rest through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

6. DEVOTIONAL ODE.

WORDS BY GEORGE S. BURLEIGH. . *Music by E. K. Glazen.*

I.

O Life and Light who deigned to bless
Our fathers in the wilderness.
More life, more light we ask of Thee
To keep our free homes ever free.

L. O. F. C.

II.

We stretch our two hands, Prayer and Praise,
 Above the past and future days,
 While o'er the present our full hearts
 Pour thanks for what Thy love imparts.

III.

Thy love, O, lover of the brave,
 We know how strong it is to save,
 And how its living wells o'erflowed,
 To cheer our founder's stormy road.

IV.

He came to plant with reverent toil
 The tree of freedom in our soil,
 And while his faith and love survive,
 Its broadening boughs shall o'er us thrive.

V.

Thou Life, whose springs have nursed that tree,
 Still keep our free homes ever free.
 O not in the steel-clad arm of a tyrannous power is our trust,
 The rock that can never be moved is the law of the true and the just.

VI.

God over us—light and love, God under us—strength and will,
 God in and around us—truth and liberty deep and still;
 Herein shall we live and move and our being firmly hold,
 That the land of our love may be strong when the floods are over it rolled
 O God, if we come to be crowned, we are crowned on the bended knee,
 And for all that we fail of Thy law, we are humble in heart before Thee.

7. HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

BY THOMAS DURFEE LL. D., *Chief Justice Supreme Court
of Rhode Island.*

8. VALEDICTORY ODE,

WORDS BY PROF A. WILLIAMS. . MUSIC BY EBEN A. KELLEY.

Sung by the Arion Club.

I.

Hail, honored name, our sacred dead!
Thy spirit great, triumphant, free,
O'er all our land, beyond the sea,
On wings of light has sped;
Speeds onward yet to other goals,
With light and life to fettered souls.

II.

In every age the world is blest
By those ordained to free the opprest;
A martyr-chief by Heaven lent to loose the shackled slave;
A warrior stern, magnanimous, his country's hope to save;
In every age the world is blest,
'Tis God's own arm made manifest.

III.

Thy task divine to lift up Truth dethroned.
Thyself maligned, disowned,
Yet like lone mountain peak, beloved of loftiest star,
And touched by heaven's pure ray,

Thy mind unyielding towers, a beacon seen from far :
 The night is changed to day,
 The bonds that bind the souls of men
 Are rent, ne'er to be forged again.

IV.

Lift the loud pean, ye jubilant people,
 The soul is released from tyranny's chains ;
 Join in the chorus, ye bells in the steeple,
 Proclaiming afar that God ever reigns ;
 In glad emulation the nations of earth
 Now march to the light that heralds new birth.

V.

Hail prophet undaunted, blest oracle hail !
 Souls battling for right will forever prevail ;
 All down through the ages, as truth shall unfold,
 Thy trials and triumphs in song shall be told.
 O Home of Soul-Freedom ! prolong the acclaim,
 Cease never to sing of thy guardian name.

9. DOXOLOGY.

Sung by the Arion Club, the Congregation Joining.

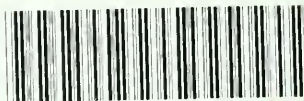
10. BENEDICTION

BY THE REV. DAVID H. GREER.

And now unto the King Eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be the glory and the honor forever, and may the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and may the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be upon us and remain with us always.



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